SEMANTIC-DISCURSIVE FUNCTIONS OF LINGUISTIC EXPRESSION THAT MATERIALIZE CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN DISCURSE GENRES

(Funções semântico-discursivas de expressões linguísticas que materializam metáforas conceituais em gêneros discursivos)

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Abstract: *This work aims at presenting some results of the research developed in the Project named Metaphor, Discursive Genre and Argumentation (MGDA) which has the purpose of describing linguistic expressions that materialize conceptual metaphors in several discursive genres, searching for the identification of the semantic-discursive function(s) of such expressions. The researches were done by my students and me and the present results reveal some discursive functions not seen in the literature so far: the presence of metaphorical expressions that materialize conceptual metaphors with the function of approaching the advertiser to the interlocutor in publicity and linguistic expressions that literalize the everyday life conceptual metaphor, producing laughter in humor, among other semantic-discursive functions.*
Key-words: *linguistic expressions; conceptual metaphors; discursive genre; meaning.*

Resumo: *Apresento, aqui, alguns resultados de pesquisas vinculadas ao projeto Metáforas, Gêneros Discursivos e Argumentação (MGDA), que visa descrever as expressões linguísticas atualizadoras de metáforas conceituais em gêneros discursivos diversos, buscando identificar a(s) função(ões) semântico-discursiva(s) dessas expressões. Os resultados aqui apresentados são de pesquisas desenvolvidas por mim e por orientandos, os quais nos revelaram algumas funções discursivas até então não apresentadas pela literatura da área: a presença de expressões metafóricas atualizadoras de metáforas conceituais com a função de aproximar, no gênero publicidade, o anunciante do interlocutor; expressões linguísticas que literalizam a metáfora conceitual do cotidiano, gerando o riso em gêneros de humor; entre outras funções semântico-discursivas.*
Palavras-chave: *expressões linguísticas; metáforas conceituais; gênero discursivo; sentido.*

INTRODUCTION

The present work aims at describing some results of the research developed by my students and me about discursive functions not studied in the literature so far: the discovery of metaphorical expressions that materialize conceptual metaphors having the function of approaching, in publicity, the advertiser (seller) to the interlocutor (virtual buyer): linguistic expressions, linked to the non-verbal text and to the context, which literalize the everyday life conceptual metaphor, producing laughter in humor; expressions that materialize metaphors and/or metonyms with modalizing function, among other discursive-semantic functions.

As theoretical support, Lakoff and Johnson (2002 [1980], 2003), Barcelona (2003) and others are taken into account – particularly with reference to conceptual metaphor – and Ducrot (1988), Cervoni (1989), Castilho & Castilho (1992), among others, concerning the study of discursive-semantic function(s) of metaphorical and/or metonymical linguistic expressions.

It is crucial to say that it is not our intention to "match" the conceptual metaphor theory to discursive/enunciative theories used in the project, either to provoke an epistemological argumentation about it. Our investigation aims at using these theories – both the conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson 2002 [1980]) and the discursive/enunciative theories – in the different steps of the investigation. The conceptual metaphor theory is used in the first step where the presence of linguistic expressions that materialize conceptual metaphors and the respective conceptual metaphors are investigated. In the second step, the function of linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors in the discursive/enunciative level will be investigated in the light of one of the discursive/enunciative theories.

After such explanations, some expressive results that point to significative uses of linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors will be presented.

LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS THAT MATERIALIZE METAPHORS IN PUBLICITY

Since 2005, we have investigated the presence and semantic-discursive function of linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors in publi-

city[1] (propaganda) and the results point out to the recurrence of linguistic expressions that materialize ontological metaphors – those that change abstract concepts into entities – things or beings (animals or humans).

To Lakoff and Johnson (2002 [1980]), ontological metaphors are so natural and omnipresent to our thoughts that they are normally considered fairly evident and direct descriptions of the mental phenomenon. They are present in a native language to help us deal with our experiences (events, activities, emotions, ideas, processes etc.), which are taken as discrete entities or substances.

Among the ontological metaphors, scholars point out personification as the one whose main characteristic is to conceive experiences (events, activities, emotions, ideas, processes etc.) as human beings. However, according to our investigations, it seems to be possible to speak about two different types of ontological metaphors as personification.

The first type of metaphor is that in which an experience or physical object is thought as a living entity (use of characteristics or actions proper to a living being). In other words, characteristics of the *source domain* (a certain living being) are taken and projected into the *target domain* (the experience about which we are referring to). In this case, it is observed a kind of personification (to give characteristics of a living being to an experience). In the two advertisements below, the linguistic expressions serve as examples to show the difference between to think an abstract concept as only a living being and to think it as a human being.

1) *Sede* de verdade *a gente doma* no laço.[2] (Cerveja Cristal, Revista Veja)

A characteristic proper to a living being (*source domain*) is given to *sede* (*thrist*) (*target domain*) once the verb 'domar' ('tame') belongs to the semantic field of wild animal to be made domestic. *Sede* (*Thirst*) (abstract concept) is personified, but characteristics proper to a human being are not used to

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1. Some publicity theoreticians present differences between the terms 'publicity' and 'propaganda', others use them interchangeably. In this work, we will be following the latter tendency.
2. "We tame intense thirst with a lasso." (Cerveja Cristal, Revista Veja) Translator's note: a translation as close as possible to the source language was adopted for this sentence as an attempt to keep the metaphorical construction understandable, though it may cause certain strangeness in the target language.

refer to it, rather characteristics of a non-human animal are used. In this context, the linguistic expression "domar sede" ("tame thirst") materializes the SENSATION OF DRYNESS IS AN ANIMAL (living being) conceptual metaphor, emphasizing that, in some peculiar situations, a human being "may be tamed".

In the following advertisement, the linguistic expression [*A moda*] *dá uma passadinha* ([*Fashion*] *pays a short visit*) is an example of a real personification.

2) *A moda sai da passarela* para as ruas. Mas primeiro *dá uma passadinha no GNT*.[3] (Propaganda do GNT, canal GLOSAT, Revista Veja)

In this advertisement, characteristics of a human being (*source domain*) are given to *moda* (*fashion*) (*target domain*). In other words, 'moda' ('fashion') comes to adopt a human being behavior in [*A moda*] *dá uma passadinha* ([*fashion*] *pays a short visit to GNT*).

In the *corpus* of the research, it is noticed that there is a recurrence of linguistic expressions that materialize ontological conceptual metaphors, with predominance of expressions that materialize ontological metaphors by personification – to the object that is being sold to the readers, characteristics, if not human but, at least, proper to a living being, are given.

In the first group of advertisement below, it is noticed that the ontological metaphors by personification in which the characteristics of a certain being from the *source domain* are taken as living beings in the *target domain* referring to an abstract concept or to an object, but there is no humanization.

3) Atenção, mamães: *está nascendo o novo sabão em pó* da Assolan.[4] (Assolan, Revista Veja)

4) *Grandes invenções* não *nasceram* para *ficar paradas*.[5] (HP Invent, Revista Veja)

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3. Fashion goes from catwalk to the streets. But first, *it pays a short visit at GNT.*(GNT advertisement, Canal Glosat, Revista Veja) (See note p. 2)

4. Attention, mothers: *the new Assolan powder soap is being born.* (Assolan, Revista Veja) (See note p. 2)

5. *Great inventions are* not *born* to be at a standstill. (Hp Invent, Revista Veja) (See note p.2)

These two advertisements materialize the OBJECTS ARE LIVING BEINGS ontological metaphors and, though they can not be exclusively included in the list of the humanized ones, they have similar function, because the verb "nascer" ('to be born') usually belongs to the human semantic field. Thus, in this genre, the resource personification corroborates with the intention of approaching the product for sale to the eventual buyer so that he/she can be persuaded.

In the second group of advertisement below, there is the presence of linguistic expressions that materialize ontological metaphors in which two domains cross (*source domain* and *target domain*), with characteristics proper to human being transported from the former to refer to or to give meaning to something abstract.

5) Novo Samsung Light. *Preços magros*.[6] (Vivo, Revista Veja)

6) Saiba se o *coração do seu carro anda bem*. Faça revisão preventiva.[7] (WebMotors)

7) [O carro da Nissan] *Nasceu aqui*, mas foge do padrão: *Sabe falar* japonês.[8] (Nissan, Revista Veja)

In the examples from 5 to 7, the personification of objects (or the personification of processes directly linked to these objects) that are being sold to virtual consumers is clearly seen. In these contexts, the OBJECTS ARE PEOPLE ontological conceptual metaphor is materialized by the highlighted linguistic expressions. This personification is materialized by adjectives and/or expressions which normally translate characteristics proper to human beings (*thin* [*bargain*], *the manner*) or by verbs that translate human actions (*the heart goes well*, *pays a short visit*, *is born*, *speak*). Both the verbs and the adjectives are being used in a semantic field proper to humans, strategy that brings what is being advertised near the reader.

In all of these texts, we verify that two domains cross: a *source domain*, from which the speaker brings (select) some aspects, and a *target domain*, to which the selected aspects are brought. However, it is important to

6. *New Samsug light. Thin {Bargain} prices.* (Vivo, Revista Veja) (See note p. 2)
7. Be sure *the heart of your car goes well.* Carry out routine maintenance. (WebMotors) (See note p. 2)
8. *It was born here* but is out of the pattern. *It knows how to speak* Japanese. (Nissan, Revista Veja) (See note p. 2)

emphasize that the concept of *source domain* is not entirely transferred; only some aspects are projected into the *target domain*. Besides, it is essential to say that the speaker supposes that the interlocutor shares with him/her the knowledge about the *source domain*.

The recurrence of linguistic expressions that materialize ontological conceptual metaphor in publicity, with predominance of personification, supports the thought that these linguistic expressions may be included in the list of the argumentative resources as far as this genre is concerned, at least. It is observed that, in publicity, the linguistic expressions that materialize conceptual metaphor are carefully elaborated to call the interlocutor's attention; they are not ordinary, they are quite new, giving the impression that there is an accurate and strategic process of elaboration proper to this genre. These expressions have been proved to be a productive resource for such genre with the possible objective of persuading the reader (virtual buyer) by conferring characteristics or action to what is being sold (advertised).

LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS THAT MATERIALIZE METAPHORS IN CARTOONS

In cartoons, more precisely in "All Mafalda" by Joaquim Salvador Lavado – Quino, Lucena (2008) investigated the presence and semantic-discursive function of linguistic expressions that materialize conceptual metaphors.

Lakoff and Johnson's theory (2002 [1980], 2003) was used to identify the linguistic expressions and their respective conceptual metaphors. Afterwards, the semantic-discursive function(s) of those expressions are identified.

The linguistic expressions found in the cartoons were analyzed in the light of Ducrot's Polyphony Theory (1988) and it was verified that the Locutor (L) - responsible for the discourse as a whole – Quino – uses two voices in each scene, two different points of view: the enunciator 1 (E1) – the common sense – responsible for the linguistic expression that materialize the conceptual metaphor; and the enunciator 2 (E2) – responsible for the literalization of the conceptual metaphor materialized by the linguistic expression, producing humor in the cartoons seen below. Literalization is understood under Lakoff and Johnson's perspective (1989:114)

- "If an expression of a language is (1) conventional and ordinary, then it is also (2) semantically autonomous and (3) capable of making reference to objective reality.
- Such a linguistic expression is called "literal".
- No metaphors are literal."

08
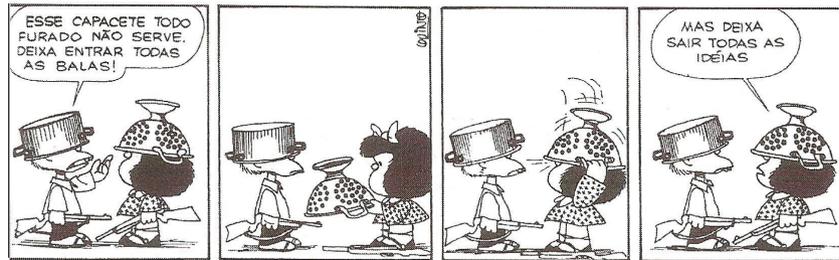
Frame 1: This helmet, all pierced, is useless. It lets the bullets come in.
Frame 4: But it lets all ideas come out.

In the cartoon, the MIND IS A RECIPIENT conceptual metaphor, here identified, was linguistically materialized by the expression "*mas deixa sair todas as idéias*" ("*but it lets all ideas come out*") which the locutor materializes with the aid of the non-verbal text while literalizing the metaphor. Quino, the speaker responsible for the text/discourse, brings to the scene two different points of view: the E1, responsible for the linguistic expression that materializes the MIND IS A RECIPIENT conceptual metaphor, and E2, responsible for the literalization of that metaphor. This literalization, joined to the non-verbal context, makes us think about "ideas" as objects that may fall off and produces humor as an effect of meaning.

09
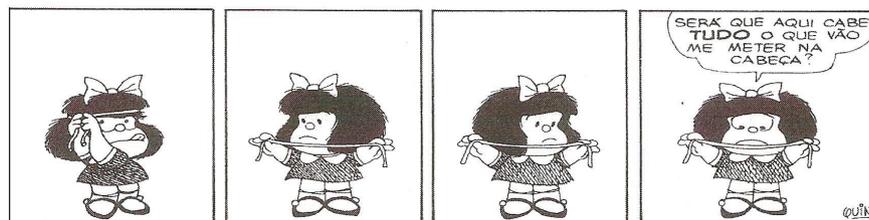
Frame 4: Does everything they're going to put in my head fit here?

Again, in the above cartoon, we have the MIND IS A RECIPIENT metaphor materialized when such metaphor is literalized by the use of the linguistic expression "Será que aqui cabe *tudo* o que vão me meter na cabeça?" ("Does *everything* they're going to put in my head fit here?), where it is observed an E1, responsible for the conceptual metaphor, which forms a consensus in the community where Mafalda lives, and an E2, responsible for the literalization of such metaphor by the use of the referred expression and the non-verbal text which confirms the literalization.

10
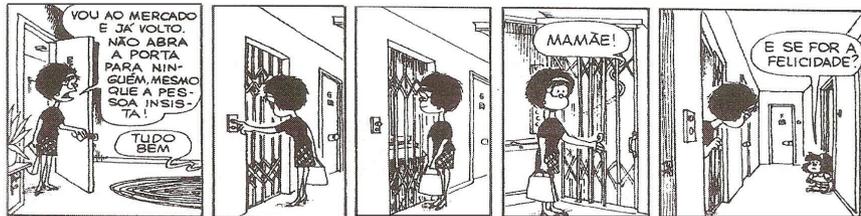
Frame 1: - I'm going to the market and I'll be back soon. Don't open the door to anyone, even if the person insists.

                   - All right.

Frame 3: Mammy!
Frame 4: And if will it be happiness?

In the above cartoon, when, in Mafalda's speech, happiness is conceived as a person who can, in fact, knock at the door, the personification used to refer to happiness (abstract concept) is undone (literalized) and happiness is conceived as a real flesh and bone person. Here, it is not seen only some characteristics of the *source domain* person being used to define *target domain*. Now, the *target domain* is ipsis litteris the *source domain*, reinforced by the non-verbal context. Quino (L) puts in scene an enunciator (E2), through the sentence *E se for a felicidade?* (*And if will it be happiness?*), which creates the HAPPINESS IS A PERSON common sense metaphor, materialized, in our society, by several linguistic expressions: "Happiness hasn't knocked at my door yet", "Happiness has come to meet me", "Happiness has smiled to me".

Linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors/metonyms in police news

In the police news published in Folha de São Paulo, Lima (2008) investigated the presence and semantic-discursive function of linguistic expressions that materialize conceptual metaphor and metonyms.

In accordance with Lakoff and Johnson (2002[1980]), the previous investigations should point out to the fact that conceptual metaphors materialized by linguistic expressions would be found but, in fact, we firstly identified the presence of many expressions materializing metonyms which, on their turn, also materialize ontological conceptual metaphors – the most recurrent ones. This statement is supported by Barcelona (2003) who assures that, in many cases, a metaphor and a metonym cross in the same linguistic expression.

The recurrence of the INSTITUTION INSTEAD OF PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR IT metonym and the INSTITUTION IS A PERSON ontological metaphor (personification) materialized by the linguistic expressions is clearly observed, as illustrated below.

11) *A polícia prendeu* na madrugada de hoje um homem que viajava com 89,3 kg de maconha em um automóvel no interior de SP.[9] (FSP. 28. 19/08/2007. 3)

12) *A PM encontrou* os dois deitados na cama, já mortos, sem nenhum tipo de sinal ou hematoma.[10] (FSP. 01. 02 /01/2007. 12)

13) *Polícia Civil do Rio prende* cinco jovens de classe média.[11] (FSP. 03. 04 /01/2007. 1)

According to Lima (2008), the simultaneous occurrence of metaphor and metonym materialized by the same linguistic expressions, as seen above, is possible because, according to Barcelona (2003), a metaphor and a metonym cross in many cases. "It is what happens to the expressions

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9. This early morning *the police arrested* a man who was carrying 89,3kg of marijuana in a car in the interior of São Paulo. (FSP. 28. 19/08/2007.3)
10. *A policeman has found* two people dead in bed with no sign of violence or bruises. (FSP. 01. 02/01/2007.12)
11. *Civil Police in Rio have arrested* five middle-class youngsters. (FSP. 03.04/01/2007.1)

above: an interaction in the textual level: co-instaciation of the metaphor and metonym in the same linguistic expression […]" (Lima 2008:52).

After identifying the presence of linguistic expressions that materialize both metaphors and metonyms, the effects of meaning derived from the use of those expressions are investigated. Such investigation is done in the light of the Theory of Modalization supported by Cervoni (1989), Koch (2003), Castilho and Castilho (1993).

In thirty pieces of news analized, we have found 57 linguistic expressions materializing the INSTITUTION INSTEAD OF PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR IT metonym, in which institution is the Military, Civil or Road Police and, when these institutions are presented as the responsible entities for the reported acts, they are personified.

According to Lima (2008:60),

"In general, the institutions mentioned in our *corpus* are employed by the locutor aiming at, though being in accordance with what is said by the news, getting detached from the responsibility by using metaphorical and metonymical linguistic expressions, once it does not say specifically who are involved in the facts."

Talking about this detachment, based on the Theory of Modalization, Lima (2008: 62) affirms:

"[ ] we observe that metaphorical and metonymical linguistic expressions function as modalizers, once they are used by the locutor with the purpose of not being responsible for what is said. That is, the use of such expressions is what Guimarães (2001: 68) understands by 'linguistic elements that work as indicators of the intentions, feelings, and attitudes of the announcer', that shows the scope under which the proposition shall be understood."

WHAT IS NEW IN THE ANALYZED GENRES: THE CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OR THE LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS THAT MATERIALIZE METAPHORS?

According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 3)

"[...] that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature."

According to these authors, conceptual metaphors integrate our everyday life, though we are not conscious about the fact that we work out our abstract concepts from our concrete experiences. In this sense, the presence of metaphors materialized by linguistic expressions in the analyzed genres is not new. What is new in our project is the discovery of the predominance of materialization of certain type of conceptual metaphor and/or the different semantic-discursive function(s) in discursive genres.

There is no predominance of linguistic expressions that materialize a certain conceptual metaphor in the cartoons because, as noticed, in this *corpus* the relevance rests not on the predominance of materializing of one of the metaphors, but on the literalization of metaphors.

Linguistic expressions that materialize simultaneously metonyms and ontological metaphors, characterizing personification, are predominant in police news. In this context, it is observed that the predominance these expressions is due to the characteristics of the genre – news has the function to inform without requiring, at least, explicitly, any commitment from the reader/listener.

New metaphors or new linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors in both cartoons and police news are found. All conceptual metaphors as well as linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors belong to everyday life activities. What is new in relation to both analyses may be summarized as following: in cartoons and police news, the linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors have different semantic-discursive functions. This evidence supports our project thesis: linguistic expressions that materialize metaphors in each genre may take different semantic-discursive functions, depending on the social function of the genre.

By means of our investigation, the recurrence of linguistic expressions that materialize ontological metaphors, classified as process of personification, is discovered in publicity . In addition, it is discovered that, in publicity, creation remains in the level of linguistic expressions (created) used to materialize conceptual metaphors already existing in everyday life situations. The OBJECTS ARE ANIMALS metaphor exists in everyday life and it is possible to verify its materialization in many other linguistic expressions. The new aspect lays on the creation of new linguistic expressions and their use, perhaps, in new semantic fields, as seen in the advertisement for the beer.

1) *Sede* de verdade *a gente doma* no laço.[12] (Cerveja Cristal, Revista Veja)

The act of taming an animal was brought from the *source domain* 'rodeos' to make reference to the thirst (*target domain*), and a new linguistic expression was created to materialize a SENSATION OF DRYNESS ARE ANIMALS everyday life conceptual metaphor (*galloping joy*, *galloping indifference* etc.). This objective creation calls the reader's attention (virtual consumer). This kind of resource makes the reader think about the expression used, what requires that he/she recapture texts so that he/she can understand the linguistic expression presented.

Similarly, the OBJECTS ARE PEOPLE conceptual metaphor is materialized by different linguistic expressions in different contexts, conferring human characteristics to the products which are being sold so that such characteristics may personify those products.

5) Novo Samsung Light. *Preços magros*.[13] (Vivo, Revista Veja)

6) Saiba se o *coração do seu carro anda bem*. Faça revisão preventiva.[14] (WebMotors)

7) *Nasceu aqui*, mas foge do padrão: *Sabe falar* japonês.[15] (Nissan, Revista Veja)

In the texts above, objects (products) gain characteristics and objects and/or processes gain actions that are not commonly used in everyday life discourse.

It is already known that publicity texts are elaborated with planned objectives that aim at inciting a specific or the general public to a certain action. And the use of those linguistic expressions in this genre follows the same rule: the expressions are carefully thought and elaborated with the aim of calling one's attention by the fact that they are new and, at the same time, they have a very pragmatic function: to present products that meet the virtual buyers' expectations.

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12. *We tame* intense *thirst* with a lasso. (Cerveja Cristal, Revista Veja) (See note p. 2)
13. New Samsug light. *Thin {Bargain} prices.* (Vivo, Revista Veja) (See note p. 2)
14. Be sure *the heart of your car goes well*. Carry out routine maintenance. (WebMotors) (See note p. 2)
15. *It was born here* but is out of the pattern. *It knows how to speak* Japanese. (Nissan, Revista Veja) (See note p. 2)

Considering the linguistic expressions in the group of examples above, it is noticed that the 'cell phone' has characteristics proper to human beings, once 'being thin' usually makes reference to human beings in Brazil and not to objects. Besides, at the moment, because of the body cult, 'being thin' is on fashion.

Another term that characterize this body cult trend and that is very much used to characterize products, mainly electronic ones, is the adjective 'slim' (attractively thin, smart, lean).

14) TV 29" Tela Plana Ultra *Slim* - 29FU1RS - c/ Entrada USB.[16]

15) Tênis Reebok *Slim* Racer.[17]

16) Porta Cd em plástico *slim* box 5,2mm transparente Emtec PT.[18]

Taking into account the above observation, it is noticed, in the media, the presence of several linguistic expressions that materialize the OBJECTS ARE PEOPLE metaphor, but the reference is not to all sort of people; the characteristics given to these objects refer to those people who render cult to the body. These linguistic expressions that materialize the metaphors are still restrictedly used in publicity but, to some readers (consumers), this vocabulary that makes reference to the body cult is being incorporated in everyday life vocabulary.

It is important to emphasize that the linguistic expressions that materialize the ontological metaphors (personification) are recurrent both in police news and publicity, but with different semantic-discursive functions. While, in the news, the institutions are personified so that the fact can be published but the speaker neither gets engaged with nor involves one of the members of this institution: in publicity, the personification of the objects which are being offered (advertised) function as a way of bringing the virtual buyer nearer the product which is on sale.

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16. TV 29" Ultra *Slim* Plain Screen – 29FUIRS – w/USP port. (See note p. 2)
17. Reebok *Slim* Racer Tennis. (See note p. 2)
18. Emtec PT Transparent Plastic *slim* CD case box 5,2mm. (See note p. 2)

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The discussion presented in this work should not be considered as the last word but as a seed for other researches about the subject. My students and I are proceeding with our researches and we have some results ready for publication. We are conscious that the hypotheses here presented need further investigation before we can make more striking assertions on the issue. However, the results of the researches already done support the assertions here presented as far as the investigated *corpora* are concerned. Thus, it is our expectation that the observations presented may contribute to the discussion about the different ways of reading various discursive genres.

The realization that the same conceptual metaphor may be materialized by linguistic expressions in different genres with different semantic-discursive functions and the fact that they are recurrent in linguist expressions confirm our thesis: linguistic expressions that materialize metaphor may have semantic-discursive function in each discursive genre according to the socio-communicative function of each genre.

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